

Colonialist Tendencies in Education Abroad

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This paper considers education abroad (EA) and its relationship to global citizenship and colonialism by describing and analyzing the agitated interactions of one EA course through a post-colonial lens. Rather than claim the EA experience as emancipatory or colonialist, the paper illustrates the ways that colonialist tendencies can manifest in particular moments and through specific dynamics of an EA course. This paper illustrates the ways that colonialist tendencies related to a reifying of consumerist ideologies, a westernizing of the EA experience, and an ongoing employment of an objectifying tourist gaze became manifest in an education abroad context. The paper concludes with a discussion of the findings that includes some ideas for how education abroad programs can address its colonialist tendencies.

Across North American universities, *educating for global citizenship* has gained prominence and been brought to the forefront of university mandates and academic plans (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012). Although a contested term with multiple conceptualizations, global citizenship involves “being aware of responsibilities beyond one’s immediate communities and making decisions to change habits and behavior patterns accordingly” (Schattle, 2009, p. 12). As a concept, global citizenship is thought to bring together the dimensions of social responsibility, global awareness and civic engagement (Perry et al., 2013). Thus, the overarching aim of global citizenship education (GCE) is to use a variety of pedagogical strategies to “enhance students’ global perspectives and help them to contribute to a more peaceful, environmentally secure, and just world” (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012, p. 2).

As GCE has moved into university missions and academic plans, one pedagogical strategy that has moved from the wings to the main stage is education abroad (EA). Education abroad is a broad term that is used to capture any form of transnational student movement for the purposes of learning – from the traditional study abroad and exchange programs to more recent formations that include short-term study abroad, international service learning and *course-embedded* programs in which students travel as a group and are accompanied by course instructors (Ogden, 2010). Although EA has a long history in universities, its prominence has risen as EA programs have increasingly been framed as an important tool for preparing students for global citizenship (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012). Indeed, education abroad programs are growing and expanding. In a recent review of university GCE mandates, education abroad programs were found to be the most commonly cited and advertised form of global citizenship education in post-secondary institutions, more so than strategies such as internationalizing the faculty or student body or expanding the number of course offerings with a global focus (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012). The number of EA

programs has grown dramatically; in 2000, only 65 percent of U.S. colleges had an EA program, and by 2006, the number had risen to 91 percent (Stearns, 2009, p. 65).

The rapid growth and new prominence afforded to education abroad has been affirming to scholar-practitioners, who have long contended that EA is a transformative pedagogy. For advocates, the transformative potential of EA stems primarily from two pedagogical features. The first is that EA creates opportunities for students to be exposed to beliefs and value orientations that contrast with their current beliefs (Tarrant, 2009). As Prins and Webster (2010) articulate, “by stepping outside national borders, students become more aware of how they and people abroad view their home nation, an awareness that can reinforce or erode their identification with ideological features” of the home country (p. 7). The second is the immersive and experiential quality of the pedagogical approach, both of which differ from the traditional classroom (Hovey, 2004). Tarrant (2009) noted that EA offers a “delivery mechanism that engages students with the real world and enables them to think beyond their own immediate needs while recognizing the critical responsibility that humans have in mitigating environmental issues” (p. 442). Combined, these qualities create a transformational learning environment, and through their participation in EA, students are led towards developing a more globally aware and justice-oriented worldview.

However, the new attention directed toward education abroad has also troubled the EA field. The rapid rise of EA programs, and its newly articulated relationship with GCE, has been met with some suspicion. Questions have been raised regarding the lack of clarity of the meaning of *global citizenship*: that although the term is widely used, it is rarely defined and explained (Streitwieser & Light, 2010). The rapid growth of EA programs in universities has also raised questions regarding whether growth may in fact be driven by motivations other than global justice aims.

Critics have drawn attention to the entrepreneurial and consumer-oriented flavor of contemporary education abroad and have suggested that although EA programs claim to promote global citizenship, they seem to be more highly valued as a marketing strategy to attract top-level students (Breen, 2012; Ogden, 2007) and as a way for universities to generate additional revenue from students who pay a premium to participate in EA programs (Lewin, 2009).

The growth of EA programs has also raised concerns about the actual, on-the-ground activities that unfold within the context of education abroad and about whether EA programs live up to the claim of fostering global citizenship. For example, one critique of EA has been that students do not truly enter the culture, and that particularly in light of the current trend of shorter stays, instructor accompaniment and increased access to technology, the transformative potential of EA has significantly weakened (Kinginger, 2010; Ogden, 2007). However, perhaps even more damaging has been the critiques brought forward by post-colonial scholars, some of which call into question the entire endeavor of education abroad. Post-colonial scholarship draws attention to the ways that education abroad operates in ways that maintain oppressive power relations between host and visitor, through practices that maintain the visitor at the center and reify notions of the host as the needy *other*. For example, post-colonial scholarship has critiqued the ways that EA promotional materials uses imagery that marks the host culture as traditional, as well as ethnically and racially distinct from the visiting student (Caton & Santos, 2009). Similarly, students are often drawn to education abroad out of a desire to *help* or *make a difference*, which is a stance that also positions the host culture as *in need of help* (Cook, 2008; Palacios, 2010). In fact, Zemach-Bersin (2007) has argued that EA is as imperialistic an endeavour as the “missionaries, colonizers, anthropologists, and humanitarian aid workers who have served as ‘goodwill ambassadors’” who came before them (p. 24). In light of these debates, it can become difficult to make sense of the education abroad experience. Are EA experiences transformative? Or are students the new colonialists?

In this paper, I aim to contribute to this discussion by offering a descriptive account of one education abroad program, which I analyze through a post-colonial lens. As I will illustrate in the paper, my aim is not to claim the EA experience as emancipatory or colonialist, but instead to show the ways that the course had *colonialist tendencies* which became manifest in particular moments and through specific dynamics of the course. Specifically, this paper illustrates the ways that colonialist tendencies related to a reifying of consumerist ideologies, a westernizing of the EA experience and an ongoing employment of an

objectifying tourist gaze, became manifest in an education abroad context.

By providing a description and analysis of the moments of the course as they unfolded, this paper builds on a growing body of work in which scholar-practitioners engage in critical reflection on the pedagogy of their own practice in an effort to uncover moments of contradiction between rhetoric and reality (Heron, 2007). As Himley (2004) contends:

...turning a careful, critical eye to the ethical desires, peculiar intimacies, agitated interactions, material realities, and power asymmetries...we can excavate and explicate both the immediate and broader relations of power that structure these encounters and identify opportunities for at least partially progressive practice or effects (p. 423).

Thus, after a brief overview of the course, I present a description and analysis of the agitated interactions that emerged in the context of the education abroad course. The paper concludes with a discussion of the findings that includes some ideas for how education abroad programs can address its colonialist tendencies.

Study Context: Education Abroad in Cuba

The course from which this paper draws was a short-term and instructor-led EA course that involved taking 17 Canadian students to Cuba for an 18-day sojourn, of which I was the course developer and co-instructor. The course, titled “International Field Experiences in Recreation and Leisure,” was a senior-level full-credit spring semester elective offered to students majoring in Recreation and Leisure Studies (my home department). The course was introduced into the curriculum as a departmental response to the university’s growing interest in internationalization and community engagement. Since the course was developed in 2009, it has been offered twice: in 2010 and 2012 (the incidences described in this paper are drawn solely from the 2010 offering). The broad course title was intended to allow different teachers in the department to develop and offer international field courses specific to their interests. The primary course objective was for students to emerge with a more robust understanding of the ways that recreation and leisure practices are shaped by and intertwined with culture, politics and globalization. The intent of traveling to Cuba was to add an experiential perspective to the theoretical analysis as well as provide an opportunity for the students to develop leadership and instructional competencies in a cross-cultural setting. I was interested in teaching the international field course due to its unique pedagogy as well as my academic interest in the course material. I chose Cuba as the country of

focus because it is relatively close to Canada, yet it offered a range of contrasts, particularly in terms of political ideology and delivery systems related to sport and recreation.

In the preceding fall semester, 25 students applied and were interviewed for the spring course, and 17 were accepted. Students began meeting in January on a twice-weekly basis to prepare for the trip. Academic preparation included student-led seminars on various aspects of Cuba (e.g., history, significant events, health, education, and political systems). Some time was spent on preparation for travel (health and safety, what to expect, etc.). The final component was the preparation of specific recreation and outdoor education lessons which students would deliver as part of our program with one of our host partners (faculty and students in a recreation and outdoor education program at a Cuban university) at a Canada-Cuba outdoor education camp. We left for our sojourn in May, after the winter term had ended.

Colonialist Tendencies: Description and Analysis

For our first week in Cuba, we stayed at a basic hotel in a vibrant area of Havana within walking distance from the Malecon, the city's famous seaside walkway. Our week was organized similar to an education tour in that each day had a theme such as history, environment or politics. We began our day with breakfast in the hotel followed by a group meeting. Each morning was spent in a lecture at the university, followed by an afternoon field trip that was relevant to the day's theme. We spent the second half of our sojourn camping with our host partners at an outdoor education center located in Pinar del Rio province, about two hours' drive from Havana. The two weeks contrasted dramatically in terms of the activities, dynamics and positioning of the student group. The moments that are described below are drawn primarily from the first week of the course.

Canadianizing Cuba: Importing Familiar Comforts and an Objectifying Tourist Gaze

Day Five. Havana. Late afternoon. We had finished our scheduled activities and it had been an interesting and fulfilling day. In the morning we walked from our hotel to the University of Havana where the students listened to a lecture on Cuban history, delivered in Spanish and translated into English, by a professor from the university. After lunch on their own, mainly at nearby restaurants, students reconvened as a group to visit Revolution Square. The visit was quite powerful for some, as the words from the morning lecture took on more weight in the open space of the square. Surrounded by the figures of Jose Marti, Che

Guevara, and Camilo Cienfuegos, we could feel the energy of the revolutionary spirit of this remarkable country. Between reading the exhibits and wandering the grounds taking pictures, we spent over two hours at the square. On the way back, we talked as a group about the revolution, what drove the Cuban people to overthrow its government, and what kinds of happenings in Canada might lead the students in the group to undertake acts of resistance or activism.

We made it back to the hotel and had a bit of free time before our scheduled dinner. The group was hot and tired. Some students headed to the cool of their air-conditioned hotel rooms to watch TV. Others grabbed their swimsuits and headed upstairs to have a dip and relax by the side of the rooftop pool.

As discussed in the opening, one of the central rationales of education abroad is how, in moving outside the walls of the traditional university, it opens up new opportunities for teachers and learners to explore alternative or counter-normative pedagogies – pedagogies that Howard (1998) characterizes as those that “qualitatively change the norms and relationships of the teaching-learning process” (p. 23). Certainly, teaching in Cuba did this, and the vignette above – a vignette that described a typical day in our first week in Cuba – captures the ease at which we moved out of the traditional lecture hall model of university teaching and learning, with its structured format and didactic style, into a more fluid learning format in which the construction of knowledge was multidirectional. The shift toward a more dialogue-based and *engaged pedagogy* (Hooks, 1994) was engendered in no small part by the immense amount of time that we spent together in the international learning context, which allowed us to engage in lengthy conversations about our experiences and emerging perspectives.

While this vignette captures the ease at which we were able to leave behind some of the norms of university classroom pedagogy, it also captures what I failed to notice when planning the course: the extent to which I also moved many of the norms of my Canadian teaching-learning environment into this new setting. When I consider this now, what I notice is not how different it was from the way we teach and learn at home, but in fact how similar it was: the flow of the day; the parceling out of activities; the lecture in the morning and free time in the evening. Even though we were in a different country, we were following a school-day routine and a style of pedagogy that was familiar and comfortable.

Another source of familiarity and comfort was the hotel environment. We stayed at a two-star hotel, low quality by Canadian standards perhaps, but it afforded us rooms with showers, air conditioning, television and a restaurant buffet with food that we were familiar with: eggs and toast, chicken, potatoes, rice, beans and fruit.

Our hotel had a computer station in the lobby, which students could use to send emails back home. Even more than these amenities, the hotel offered students a space into which they could retreat and take a break from Cuba life until they were called upon to re-enter. In the space of the hotel they would relax, either at the pool or the restaurant, chatting with one another or with other tourists or students that were staying in the hotel.

While the hotel was comfortable, it also shaped, immensely, the way we encountered Cuba. In Cuba, the separation of tourists from locals in hotels is significant; up until 2004, Cuban nationals were not permitted to enter hotels beyond the front lobby. Even at the time of our visit, while spaces were legally open to Cubans, they were subjected to a high degree of surveillance and policing from Cuban governmental hotel workers. So, the rooftop pool, the hotel rooms, and even the restaurant that our students frequented with regularity were de facto non-Cuban spaces within Cuba.

I want to consider how our access to these non-Cuban spaces shape our way of thinking about ourselves in relation to Cuban nationals. Did our ability to physically separate ourselves from Cuban life make it easier for us to conceptually and discursively separate ourselves, as Westerners, from those we encountered in Cuba? Did it lead us to think about Cuba as our *object* of study – a fascinating phenomenon we were able to examine, discuss, and critique without having to also consider ourselves in relation to it?

In retrospect, we had adopted what scholars in tourism have referred to as the *tourist gaze*. For Urry (1990/2002), the tourist gaze is a socially organized way of seeing and experiencing a given locale. The tourist gaze is guided by the anticipation of pleasure and directed toward objects such as an ethnic group, landscape, or cultural performance. According to Urry (1990/2002), the tourist gaze organizes the encounters of visitors with the *other*, leading tourists to notice separation, otherness, and difference, while often neglecting to see how places are intimately bound to other economies, nations, and peoples. In other words, the tourist gaze reinforces an “othering” process between visitors and the host community.

Education abroad has not always been associated with tourism. In fact, it has for many years been positioned as an alternative and a counterpoint to tourism-based travel formations. Travel under the auspices of education has been framed as distinct from, and superior to, travel undertaken for leisure and entertainment, which is characterized by the *ugly tourist* (Prins & Webster, 2010). However, Ogden (2007) argues that the terrain of education abroad has been shifting. As education abroad has moved into the mainstream of university mandates, international courses have proliferated, and, further, they have come to take on a different form to expand their appeal to the

mainstream student. In his paper titled “The View from the Veranda,” Ogden (2007) contends that the planners of these courses face “unrelenting pressure” to meet the growing demand among students for familiar amenities and conveniences during their international stay (p. 36). Some of what Ogden identifies, such as access to internet, English TV, and swimming pools, as well as excursions to beaches, were amenities that I too had built into this course. He also points to other conveniences, such as offering classes taught in English, classes offered exclusively to international students, and inflationary grading. In other words, students traveling abroad, even while in a new country, “carry [with them] the home-grown “bubble” of their American lifestyle” (Ogden, 2007, p. 38), which allows the student “to remain in the comfortable environs of the veranda while observing their host community from a safe and unchallenging distance” (Ogden, 2007, p. 36). Indeed, the question I now ask myself is, with these amenities I had built into the course, how much time did students really spend in *Cuba*?

The tourist gaze produces more than distance; it also produces power as it relates to *who has the power to gaze upon the other*. In an encounter, we can see this power play out when we ask such questions as: Who has greater control over when and how they are seen? Who has the freedom to escape the gaze, and who does not? Whose lives are penetrated by the gaze? In general, it is the tourist who sets the terms of the encounter and intrudes on the lives of those in the host community, while their own relationships and home lives remain intact and undisturbed. Further, the direction of the gaze is one-way, which means that the lives that are penetrated by the gaze are those within the host community (Maoz, 2006). Himley (2004) considers the unequal access to the private lives of one group by another as a form of exploitation.

Consider this encounter, experienced by a student in my group. While at the Malecon, Havana’s famous seaside walkway and hangout, a student and a Cuban family who had sat down next to the Canadian students opened up a dialogue. Darren, the student, learned that the father was a police officer (the man even allowed the student to hold his gun). The family lived nearby, and the evening ended with a late-night offer by the family for Darren to return to the apartment of his new acquaintances. Darren accepted, as he noted, out of his curiosity to see “how a typical Cuban family lived.” At the apartment Darren was invited to share drinks on the small porch with the father while the family, which included a number of extended relatives who also lived in the apartment, attempted to sleep on the living room floor. As Darren prepared to leave, he and the family exchanged email addresses. When he recounted the events the following morning, Darren talked about maintaining a relationship with the family when he

returned home and sending down goods and items that the family said they needed.

Certainly we can see that the student gained new insight on Cuban life in this encounter, but what else was it? Was it friendship? Was it voyeurism? How were Darren and the Cuban family framed by this encounter? How do they see each other, and how is this way of seeing produced by, and producing of, broader social and political histories and the circumstances that brought them together? Certainly the notion of international education students being freer to leave is especially relevant to Cuba, a country with extremely oppressive policies regarding international mobility. But how does the fact that Darren met the family at the Malecon, an ambiguous contact zone (Pratt, 1992) for tourists and Cuban nationals, also organize the social relations within this encounter?

My read of this encounter is one of a Cuban family “performing poverty” for a Westerner in the hopes that the student would take a charitable view of the family. A few days later when he was asked again about this family, Darren’s commitment was much more tentative, and he admitted that he was likely not going to maintain the relationship once he returned home. However, does this even matter if what Darren takes back is a view of Cubans as the needy, and a view of Westerners as the saviors?

Manifestations of the Student-as-Consumer: “We Paid a Lot of Money for this Course.”

Day Three Morning Meeting. Breakfast was over, and the group convened on the hotel patio for our regular morning meeting. After a review of our plan for the day, the meeting is opened up for group discussion. One student, Tyler, raises a concern he has about the way that the other students in the group are impacting his experience. Tyler reminds us that we spend a lot of time together as a group, and that the evenings are everybody’s opportunity to have a little freedom, and that “no one should hold another person back from doing what they want to do.” Tyler’s point was that each person should be able to have the experience that he or she wants to have and not feel that kind of pressure from someone else in the group. Tyler says with emphasis, “We all paid a lot of money for this class; we should be able to have the experience we are looking for.” A few other students murmur their support of Tyler.

What does Tyler tell us in this moment? Certainly, Tyler is saying that he is having difficulty with other students in the group. As we learn later, the comments reflect an incident from the previous night when a fellow student – an overly needy student in Tyler’s eyes – coerced another group member to leave a night out early to walk her back to the hotel so that she would not

have to walk alone. For Tyler, this request was a demand that exceeded the limits of what a group member should be permitted to ask.

However, this conversation also communicates to us a bit of Tyler’s perspective about the purpose and value of education abroad. Tyler draws attention to the investment he has made in the course, and he is expressing his dissatisfaction that the course is not living up to the expectation he has for it. In this conversation, Tyler is looking to negotiate the terms of the educational arrangement, and this is an opportunity he is afforded due to his financial investment in his educational experience. In other words, Tyler is applying a consumerist lens in his assessment of his educational experience.

The fact that Tyler engaged with the course as a discerning consumer should perhaps not be surprising. Universities have been moving in the direction of treating students as consumers over the last 20 years. With government subsidies shrinking, universities now actively compete for students and student dollars. This competition, Newson (2004) argues, has moved universities toward a model in which they work to attract students by offering them what they want. According to Ogden (2007), what students want, are “amenities and services. As customers, they want top-notch recreational facilities, smaller classes, and what seems like on-demand contact with counselors, advisers, faculty, and administrators” (p. 36-37). Thus, students begin to be positioned as consumers even before they begin their university education.

The positioning of students as consumers continues through the career of the typical student. As Newson (2004) describes, “accountable primarily to themselves...students proceed through educational institutions on the basis of individual achievement and mastery over whatever body they ‘choose’ to learn” (p. 230). University teaching and administrative practices, including the emphasis within universities on marketable skills and marketing opportunities, and optimization and evaluation based on economic principles (Porfilio & Yu, 2006) and the opening up of space within the university for corporate interests to be met (Newson, 2004) reinforce this ideology.

Certainly, students are not the only ones disciplined by the student-as-consumer ideology. As someone who has been enmeshed in institutions of higher education for the past eighteen years, it would be naïve to suggest that the consumerist ideology has not shaped my practices as a university teacher; it certainly has. For example, Newson (2004) notes that one aspect of the student-as-consumer model is for students to position themselves as *receivers of a service*, which in turn disciplines me to fulfill the subject position of *provider* of the educational service or *product* that students come to consume. Numerous aspects of

university teaching, from course design, scheduling, and the evaluation process, reinforce the teacher-student relationship in terms of a service exchange that emphasizes information-dissemination, predictable outcomes, teacher control, and student passivity (Clayton & Ash, 2004). The past five years of my career has been driven by my interest in unravelling the myriad ways that consumerist ideologies discipline my teaching practice and looking for alternative or *counter-normative* (Howard, 1998) pedagogy – a search that, in fact, led me toward the international field course as an alternative pedagogy. However, ideologies are not easily left behind. Although we stepped out of our traditional classroom environment, Tyler's comments draw attention to some of the ways that our ideology of student-as-consumer travelled with us and took shape in the new teaching and learning context. In fact, given the additional expense of education abroad, which is borne solely by the student, I suggest that the international context may in fact work to *amplify* the student-as-consumer ideology.

Consider how consumerist orientations might also be tied up with the motivations of students who decide to take an international course for credit. Certainly, students take an international course with the purpose of enhancing their global perspective. However, what else draws them to move their learning to an international context? As I reflect on the students who participated in my course, I am able to identify at least two other motives. One strong motive among students was the desire to undergo a journey of personal discovery and transformation. One student, Lauren, typified this intent. Lauren was in her final year at the university; the EA course was the last credit she needed on her transcript and the last course she would take at the university. Overall, Lauren's experience in the university had been rocky; she often struggled with the academic demands of her courses and at times became consumed with the social dynamics of her circle of friends. She wished to find herself and hoped that the two weeks in Cuba would provide her with the opportunity to reflect back on her life in Canada, on what was working and not working for her in her life, with the intent that she would return with a stronger sense of identity and direction.

A second motivation among students was the desire to gain international experience that would be useful for future advancement. Although at the time, students were generally not able to identify specifically how they saw the course as related to their future goals, it was clear that they believed that taking an international course had a currency in the kinds of worlds they aspired to achieve in. In other words, they viewed the course as a form of what Bourdieu (1986) termed an educational credential. The credentialing of their participation in the international course was

evident among the students I taught. By taking the course, students met the requirements to obtain a special *international plus* notation on their university transcript – a notation that at least half of the students applied for and obtained (the university also had an *experience plus* notation that students earned through volunteer service). Participation in the course also became central to resumes and applications of former students to teacher training programs and other post-undergraduate work. Interestingly, both motivations – the *personal discovery* motivation and *career development* motivation – have been noted in more recent studies focusing on motivations for participation in learning abroad programs (Tiessen, 2012).

I would like to return to Tyler's comments for a moment because it is important to consider not only his comments, but how this moment unfolded. So now I ask: What did Tyler's comment do to our learning experience? What power did his words yield? Here we need to look at how his comments were received by the group. For the most part, we accepted Tyler's viewpoint with little comment or critical consideration. Does this mean that the frame through which Tyler made sense of the education abroad experience was shared by that the rest of the group? It may. As Newson (2004) has noted, the student-as-consumer ideology is currently the dominant ideology of university education. However, there is another explanation: group members may have thought differently yet chose not to vocalize their dissent. Chaput and O'Sullivan (2013) have recently noted how in international field courses in which students travel as a member of a group, the push to maintain group harmony restricts students' ability to deliberate about important issues, especially if they are thought to be contentious. They noted that when students heard group members share perspectives that differed from their own, they opted to 'bite their tongue' rather than initiate a critical discussion about the issue at hand.

Discussion

The intent of this paper was to illustrate the ways that colonialist tendencies enter into the teaching and learning environment of education abroad. It points to the difficulty that students and teachers experience in their attempt to leave behind the ideologies and practices that dominate their teaching and learning experience at home, as well as the ease with which they are imported into new context and come to shape the dynamics, relationships and encounters of students in this new setting. It also points out the challenges in educating for global citizenship in the context of education abroad, and in particular, it raises questions about the notion of EA as a tool for promoting global citizenship. As Chaput and O'Sullivan (2013) noted,

educating for global citizenship has much less to do with a student's exposure to different people, places and cultures than it does with placing students in an experience in which "new knowledges are engaged, placed in relationship to one's own experience, and entered into a deliberative framework that leads to a deeper appreciation of global interdependence and worldmindedness" (p. 356). While these experiences can certainly happen in an EA context, it is also possible that they may not.

Certainly, some of these issues can be addressed by changing course practices. Some scrutinizing of course practices through a post-colonial lens can be helpful as a way to identify when and where EA courses may be unnecessarily relying on practices or beliefs that reinscribe a colonialist relationship between student visitor and host community. If identified, these practices can then be altered. In the case of my own course, I revisited the course assignments and activities with an eye to whether they maintained, or challenged, notions of the student at the center, reified an *othering* process, or called on students to implement an objectifying gaze. This led to some course changes. For example, I realized that I had been focusing too heavily on teaching students *about* Cuba, which worked to maintain the perspective of Cuba itself as the "studied other." I changed my teaching to focus on helping students analyze the various ways that they were connected to Cuba (e.g., shared history of colonization and resource extraction, complicated relations with the US, and extensive Canadian-Cuban tourism). I also revisited the different ways that the course had been westernized and removed some of them, such as the adherence to a typical Canadian university schedule. Further, in the next offering of the course students travelled around the city using the bus system used by Cuban locals versus tour buses or taxis meant for tourists. While this certainly translated into a lot of time spent waiting for the bus, it was also central to students' subjective experience of life in Cuba.

Perhaps a way forward is not to work to remove education abroad's colonialist tendencies, but instead to acknowledge them and further, to see this acknowledgement as what to build on when attempting to educate for global citizenship. To do so would require a clarification and perhaps a rearticulation of the notion of global citizen. The definition put forward by post-colonial scholar Nancy Cook (2008) offers a useful starting place. Cook (2008) suggests that we should begin to think about a global citizen as someone who "reflects on their complicity in global power relations, considers their responsibilities to those who are disadvantaged by current global arrangements, and who actively resists perpetuating them so that Othered groups can actively exist in a more just social reality" (p. 17). This kind of reflection can be built into a

course, for example, through assignments and exercises that intentionally work to disrupt taken-for-granted notions about the transformative potential and good work of education abroad. Students can also reflect on their own complicity in maintaining asymmetrical power relations in the context of their education abroad experience and its micro-moments.

Achieving Cook's (2008) vision of the global citizen perhaps also requires that some distance be inserted between the education abroad experience and the global citizenship education discourse that has come to define the student experience of these courses. While certainly education abroad may foster global citizenship, this relationship is not a foregone conclusion. Universities are encouraged to engage in reflection regarding the consequences of continuing to promote this perspective and the implications it may have on students' ability to fully understand themselves in relation to promoting global justice.

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